

THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

The Annual Safety Survey

As most units have already completed their Annual Safety Survey, I would like to explain why we perform this survey. This requirement is not new. We have just made it easier and paperless for the units to complete, and made the survey readily available for the use of every squadron, wing and region commander.

I had been trying to obtain safety data for each wing and found the results to be very sparse. After developing the idea of having an on-line Annual Safety Survey, I spoke with the IT staff at NHQ and found it to be feasible. I announced my intentions for the on-line survey to the National Board last March and again to the May 2008 NEC. Your NHQ Safety Staff then began the task of writing the survey with the help of the region SE's. During this same time, Tim Cooper, of the CAP/IT Department, began working his magic building the framework for our survey. The survey finally went on-line meeting our October deadline.

CAPR 62-1 para 2e, states, *"The effectiveness of each commander's safety efforts shall be evaluated yearly through the on-line Safety Survey process. The commander at the next higher echelon, or his/her designee, will review and comment on the surveys of all subordinate units."* Looking further, para 3c states, *"Each safety officer shall complete the on-line Safety Survey not later than 31 January of each year. Items to be addressed in this survey shall include, but are not limited to, those listed in the on-line Safety Survey found in e-Services. Once completed, this report will be sent automatically to the safety officer and the commander at the next higher echelon."*

The Annual Safety Survey covers a fiscal year (Oct-Sep) and entries can be made on-line between 1 October and 31 January. As of the 2009 deadline, we only had 28 wings where 100% of the units had completed the survey. As of this writing, 41 wings are complete. In an effort to improve on this performance, several region commanders have already stated that their wings will complete the Annual Safety Survey by 15 October next year. It only takes about a minute to make out the survey (although gathering the correct answers may take a little



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longer), hit submit and you are done. When complete, it automatically is sent to the next higher level for approval, which can be completed in about 30 seconds.

At last count, 1420 of the 1453 units required to complete the Annual Safety Survey were approved. We have 33 squadrons in 11 wings that still have not completed the Survey even though they had four months to get this done.

To my knowledge, CAP has never had a 100% completion rate for Annual Safety Surveys. This will be the first year and the commanders are looking forward to seeing the results.

There has been one Annual Safety Survey question brought up more than any other. #16 – Are aircraft and vehicles inspected prior to operation? Several units stated they did not have a vehicle or aircraft assigned to their unit. That is not the answer. If anyone in your unit is a pilot and uses a nearby aircraft, do they inspect the aircraft prior to operation? And for vehicles, if anyone in your unit borrows another unit's vehicle, or a member furnished vehicle is used, for a mission, cadet outing or other CAP business, do they inspect the vehicle prior to its operation? CAPR 77-1 says they are supposed to.

I want to thank every commander, safety officer or anyone that assisted in the completion of the Annual Safety Survey for their hard work and dedication. It could not have happened without you. The information furnished is very important to the commanders in their efforts to keep every member in CAP safe.

Remember, the person you see in the mirror each morning is the one most responsible for your safety.

Col Lyle E. Letteer, CAP
National Safety Officer

Why Should We Have So Many Accidents In CAP, Especially With So Many Flight Instructors On Board?

Complacency, Expediency, Situational Awareness, and Ownership outlines the nature of the accident rate. None of this makes sense without an understanding of the "rogue pilot", and best to insert a plug for the book Darker Shades of Blue by Tony Kern.

Complacency: I have been in a hurry to get air borne. I have waited to make this trip out West in my plane since as long as I could remember. Three times during the weather briefing the briefer told me the 10,000 foot long runway at Rock Springs, WY was closed, leaving only a 5,000 foot runway. It did not register in my mind! With outside air temperatures exceeding 40°C, the take-off charts were off the scale. That was a surprise; to find out I could land there but not take off again until like, next Spring. Onward then I pressed to Fort Bridger with a

7000 foot runway with minimal fuel reserves. Nervously that night in the motel, I asked the briefer if there was a chance the temps would fall below 10°C. It would. Takeoff data went back on the chart at temperatures below 10°C.

So often we can become victims to Complacency. Been there done that. Except this time it was a little bit different, different enough to question my safety of flight. CFIs know students place them and their aircraft in compromising situations. Getting the lesson, the BFR, the Form 5, the O'ride over without true attention is an accident in waiting. My son called it "**Unconscious Competency**"¹. We all do it. We are competent enough that we can do one thing, even inter-act with other people, yet the mind is somewhere else.

This may work well if you are working at a box store selling TVs, or even teaching school. It doesn't work when you are at 2000 over Manhattan and you lose both engines.

Expediency: How many times do I need to pre-flight the same thing over and again. So imagine the embarrassment of a line man running, yelling out to my plane soon after I yelled "Clear". Only he was yelling "Stop!" Funny think those tow-bars are: They come out of nowhere!

"So", a student pilot asked after a fuel and lunch stop, "Do I need to pre-flight the airplane again?"

"No" I said, "Only inspect those parts you don't want to fail in flight".

Situational Awareness: I just landed with a student at Green Bay, WI on his first night cross country. It was a beautiful evening for late July. Warm though, I thought. But he got fuel and we got a weather briefing for the return to Milwaukee-Timmerman (KMWC) in the Be 76 "Skipper" when I did not pay attention to a very simple piece of information; the temperature/dew point spread was only 2° and it was already 2 hours past sundown.

Curiously, as we neared home port, ground fog blocked the usual pattern of surface lights. By West Bend (KETB) the ground was obscured. I called Milwaukee approach and filed IFR (mighty Beech Skipper with a single Nav/com) and tried the Localizer 15L. We had to miss. I flew to Milwaukee-Mitchell International (KMKE) and made it into the field on an ILS, shooting the approach to minimums in a Skipper with a single Nav/com, and a nervous 35 hour pilot next to me. It was further embarrassing to call my boss at 2am and beg a ride back to Timmerman for my student and me, and explain how I could have gotten into this fix.

As for situational awareness, I don't know the answer to this one. This is **at the core** of our safety training. Review all those myriad topics; they all end or begin with "awareness" (of) something or other. Thus cometh the rogue pilot, thus cometh the infection of complacency and expediency.

¹ Did you ever take a long trip by car and wondered, frighteningly, "where did the last 10-miles go to?"
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Ownership: I have been in CAP since 1966. Then CAP's fleets of airplanes were (literally!) relics of World War II, and whatever local units could scrounge. The original 1947 CAP squadron at Timmerman Field had a PT-19 and a Fairchild 24, as late as 1968. Much has changed with all of us, and CAP particularly, in the past 43 years. Now the US Government values us to the extent we receive \$350,000 airplanes, and \$28,000 vans, and \$250,000 mobile command centers, and laptops, and printers, and radios. Where ever I have traveled as a Compliance Inspection team member, I have seen CAP people take enormous pride and self-disciplined ownership in every asset assigned to them. Yet, I have also seen an attitude that seems to betray the enormous trust and National Treasure given out of the shared common interests of Americans. The trust de-valued as if somehow that airplane was a right and not an asset with a wholly specific purpose. So, we need to hammer that fact again and again and again. Take ownership. "Return it in better condition than when I received it"

Colonel Larry Stys, CAP
CAP/IGT
FAA CFI

Summary of Form 78 Accidents and Incidents for December 2008

Aircraft

Precautionary landing: electrical; engine power; rough engine
Aircraft departed runway after touch down
Defective tie down in trailer, damaged glider during tow
Preflight: Found damaged tie-down ring
Hangar: Left horizontal stabilizer contacted metal cabinet
Right main tire went flat on landing.
Landing with crosswind on frosty runway, airplane slid into snow

Vehicle

None Reported

Bodily Injury

Cadet had eye irritation from dirt between contact lens and eye
Cadet received bloody nose playing Frisbee
Cadet cut finger with knife while opening MRE
Cadet split lip and fractured tooth after hitting bleachers while playing basketball